



In your digitized movement forward toward Force XXI don't forget to report your progress. There are many issues remaining that require thoughtful discussion and consideration. What still needs to be developed? What do we have that doesn't work as advertised? What works better than expected? Where are the holes? What is solid? What haven't we thought of? These are basic questions, of course, but every armored advocate isn't currently serving in a position authorizing micro-processor implantation into his body. They are questions we must ask and answer. Render spot reports when necessary, for the Armor community needs to hear about your discoveries and your questions. Get the debate going, for until we have the discussion, we can't effectively move past the words and ideas phase into the equipment and implementation phases. Yes, I'm calling on you to help us at *ARMOR* do our part in ushering in the future.

As we rush toward the future, however, we can't ignore what we continue to see nightly on our television screens or read daily in the morning papers. Let's face it, some situations are hard to observe. For instance, the continued throes of Yugoslavian dissolution are painful to watch. According to the Secretary of Defense, it's possible that "an evacuation of U.N. forces from Bosnia may become necessary no matter what we do." That mission would obviously require employment of a portion of the armored force once all of the political initiatives are complete. Whether we will actually send tankers, scouts, or cavalymen to help extract the multinational force that is in contact is unknown at this writing. The possibility is certainly real, though. But, whether the task is in the Balkans or not isn't the issue.

What should most interest us is that, in addition to our digitized movement to the future, and no matter what the conflict, we will move armored warriors onto a currently unfamiliar section of the battlefield. Most everyone agrees with that. So now we must think hard about what tasks a heavy unit can perform in a combat zone where the conditions fall far short of total commitment against an opposing tank or mechanized force, a la South West Asia. We can imagine the difficulties in operations other

than war (OOTW), and a few of us have even experienced them, but most heavy guys haven't: incoming fire from any direction; identification problems in discerning friendly force from foe, friendly noncombatants from hostile ones; language barriers between military forces and civilians, and amongst allied forces; restrictive rules of engagement; vehicle identification problems when both ally and potential foe use the same equipment. Our lighter warfighter brethren have dealt with these unconventional situations many times throughout the last couple of decades and have a maturing body of TTP. One need only think of Somalia and Haiti to know that across the entire spectrum of war there is a place for tankers and cavalymen, so all of us armored warfare planners and executors better get busy.

Fortunately, learning how to handle these additional stresses is part of the curriculum for our heavy forces at our Combat Training Centers, but we are still ascending this learning curve. Of course, these operations are not the armored force's *raison d'être*, but the requisite skills are ones we must add to our kit bags, ready to pull out when needed. We've all seen the embattled peacekeepers looking up to the hills and mountains, dodging bullets and shells. They've vigilantly pointed their weapons, but their rules of engagement largely prevented them from toggling their guns on. A heavy dose of discipline and an equally heavy training requirement are necessary before we put ourselves in an area being shelled, and then ask our soldiers not to return fire simply because they aren't the target. Aimed fire is too often an oxymoron.

No matter how events unfold, we owe it to our soldiers not to grab hold of tar babies that we can't shake free. We owe them well-considered tactics, useful techniques, and rock-solid procedures. We owe them time to rehearse and time to learn. We owe them our attentions to the immediacy of the close fight while we simultaneously build and discuss the structures which will win our future deep fights.

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